

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MINUTES
7:00 p.m., Monday, February 8, 2010
Public Safety Building, 401 E. Third Street, Newberg, OR

"Mission Statement: To give the citizens of Newberg a forum to voice traffic safety concerns, evaluate related issues, provide a liaison with the City and promote traffic safety within the community."

A Work Session was held prior to the meeting. General discussions occurred and were digitally recorded; topics included appropriate email use, brochure development, ACTS Oregon Mini Grant, Website Development and Photos, and Flagging for Street Crossings. No decisions were made.

Members

Present:	Chair Michael Simpson	Vice-Chair Jennifer Dawson	Doris Brandt
	Lesley Woodruff	Neal Klein	Dianna Cotter
	Ron Johns	James Oravetz	

Members

Absent: Ronald Sult (excused)

Staff

Present:	Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer	Mary Newell, Support Services Manager
	Tim Weaver, Police Sergeant	Jennifer Nelson, Recording Secretary

Others

Present: Joseph R. Clements, Ray Griffin, Charlotte Pederson, Troy Garrett, Mart Storm, and Councilor Bob Larson

CHAIR MICHAEL SIMPSON CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:03 PM.

A) Review and approve minutes of January 11, 2010

MOTION #1: Brandt/Dawson to approve the Traffic Safety Commission Minutes for January 11, 2010 as amended. (8 Yes/0 No/1 Absent [Sult]) Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Joseph Clements asked about the possibility of installing a guardrail in front of his home to prevent vehicles coming onto his lawn and damaging his property. Staff discussed the issue with him and directed him to discuss this with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) as they have jurisdiction.

DISCUSSION

A) TSC-10-002: Explore exit closure at First and Morton at Hwy 99W

TIME – 7:10 PM

Chair Simpson informed citizens present that no decisions have been made and this discussion was to just for community feedback and exploration of the possible closing of First Street at Morton Street at Hwy 99W.

Mr. Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer, presented the staff report, familiarizing the citizens and members of the area in question and the suggestions to remedy (see official meeting packet for full report).

Mr. Ray Griffin stated a lot of people use this road as a way to beat traffic on 99W to Dundee. He felt it was safer though for drivers to veer off of 99W onto First Street rather than stopping on 99W to turn onto 2nd Way. He spoke of a business being there with parking blocking the view of oncoming traffic from 99W onto First Street and suggested no parking on the east side of Morton Street.

Mr. Clements said he was against the closing of Morton Street and he requested a stop sign on 2nd way and first because he has had close calls with speeding vehicles when backing out of his driveway.

Ms. Charlotte Pederson mentioned that there used to be white lines painted with crosswalks at this intersection as well as a "stop ahead" sign between Morton Street and the auto body shop there. At some point those stop lines and crosswalks were removed with improvements and never repainted. She also suggested placing barriers to prevent traffic going west on 99W cannot turn onto 2nd Way, but still allowing traffic to turn left from 2nd Way onto 99W.

Mr. Troy Garrett spoke of people accelerating once they come off of 99W onto First Street and blowing through the stop sign at the intersection. He felt for some reason they are just not seeing the sign in time. He agreed with reinstalling a "stop ahead" sign and the white stop lines and crosswalks as well as more police monitoring. He added he has a three-year-old he does not let play outside because it is too dangerous. He wasn't sure if closing off the road would change the amount of traffic dodging traffic to Dundee.

Mr. Mart Storm commented that Sunny Crest Drive often feels like the bypass and that the stop sign on 2nd Way needs to be highlighted somehow. He felt putting a stop sign on 2nd Way would be a bad idea because cars would get stacked up coming from 99W and because it is inefficient to those needing to go around to get to Morton Street. He felt only allowing eastbound traffic to Morton Street from 99W/First Street exit would be better.

Mr. Garrett agreed with somehow blocking the area off, but he did not think it would help his business. He also did not think it would stop the pedestrian traffic.

Commissioner Lesley Woodruff asked if narrowing First Street or 2nd Way may help slow down or calm the traffic.

Chair Simpson did not favor this idea because it creates problems for emergency vehicle access.

Commissioner Neal Klein said he suggested the idea of closing First Street and did not realize there would be a lot of opposition or other issues revealed. He said he was still in favor of closing it and did not think an earlier suggestion to create a roundabout would be practical. He just wished to find a way to make this area more neighborhood-like instead of a speedway and he was curious as to the inconvenience of it.

Discussions followed about lighting and creating a cul-de-sac and the effects on the businesses present in the area. All members did agree they were against closing off Morton Street and using Main Street to go around.

OLD BUSINESS

A) TSC-09-014: Stop sign request for 2nd Way at W. First Street

TIME – 7:12 PM

This item was heard out of agenda order.

Mr. Chiu presented staff report summarizing that Mr. Clements requested stop sign at 2nd way and First Street and reviewed traffic data that shows a heavy increase of traffic in the area during rush hour. He spoke of the need to have at least 200 feet of “storage” distance from the stop sign and 99W and recommended not installing a stop sign there because there is only 125 feet available from the intersection and traffic coming off of 99W, which is much less than the minimum required. He was concerned a stop sign would create a back-up with some 400 cars traveling through there during rush hour (see official meeting packet for full report).

Commissioner Klein asked if rumble strips would be a feasible solution instead. Staff replied they do not make people slow down, they only create noise to alert drivers of danger ahead; rumble strips would really only be more of an inconvenience to the neighbors as they would be hearing cars going over them all night.

Chair Simpson suggested a “Yield to neighborhood traffic” or “Dangerous intersection ahead” sign. Staff felt signs like this would only be effective when they are placed in an area that commands respect so they can be seen and obeyed; he did not feel there was enough distance in between for this to happen and felt it could lead to signage overload.

Commissioner Jennifer Dawson asked about yellow flashing lights to warn of the dangerous intersection for vehicles coming off of 99W. Staff said it could help to some extent but he felt refreshing the white painted stop bars on the pavement would be more effective, so drivers on the downgrade can look ahead and see that a stop sign is coming up.

Commissioner Woodruff stated she really likes the idea of something physical being done, like the rumble strips and asked if there was something like rumble strips but maybe a step down without as much noise. Staff spoke of different kinds of rumble strips, ones with small humps and reverse ones where grooves are made in the pavement; but, he said that both versions can be quite noisy.

Commissioner Ron Johns asked what the speed limit is in the area. Staff replied it is posted at 25 mph on First Street and 30 mph until the bridge; there are also yellow signs that say right turn slow to 15 mph for the curve.

Mr. Garrett commented that the traffic data was collected on October 20th and he thought another survey should be done during the summer when there are more hours of daylight and more activity; he thinks the traffic counts would be even higher and the speeding averages greater as well. Staff agreed it could be different but traffic patterns in the summer are also different because of other factors, such as no school and working less; he did agree that it would be interesting to collect data for comparison though.

Commissioner Klein asked if there were any other traffic studies completed for this area. Mr. Chiu said he would have to do some research but there may not be because it is such a short length of road.

Commissioner Dianna Cotter spoke of increasing patrols in the area to see if it impacts the flow and speed.

MOTION #2: Woodruff/Klein to NOT approve the **TSC-09-014** request for a stop sign on 2nd Way at W. First Street. (8 Yes/0 No/1 Absent [Sult]) Motion carried.

Chair Simpson also directed staff to reinstall the white painted stop bars in the street and crosswalks at westbound corner of First Street and at the bottom of 2nd Way.

Mr. Chiu had some concerns about the installation of a crosswalk at an uncontrolled intersection because of the potential situation where crossing there puts a pedestrian in danger with short reaction times from oncoming traffic. When a crosswalk is installed pedestrians assume they can take the lead and traffic will respect their right of way, he felt this could be dangerous and suggested installing only the stop bars for now.

Chair Simpson understood his point but argued crosswalks help highlight the area for drivers and give pedestrians a sense of something physically calling to the attention of the drivers other than their own bodies.

Ms. Pederson commented that drivers have made comments to her while walking that she is not supposed to cross where crosswalks are unmarked because they don't realize you can and they don't look for people to be doing so.

Commissioner James Oravetz also agreed that unmarked crosswalks are disrespected by drivers and any visible sign to draw attention to drivers that pedestrians may be crossing an area tends to slow vehicles down.

Commissioner Johns agreed with staff and stated he was not sure if they should be promoting pedestrian traffic there and installing a crosswalk may encourage people to cross. He suggested painting letters that say "Slow" on the street.

Chair Simpson discussed the possibility of an oversized sign warning drivers of a stop ahead. Staff said the size of the sign depends on the posted speed limit and he would have to research that matter.

Mr. Tim Weaver, Police Sergeant, spoke of the area being unimproved and heavily traveled and suggested looking into something more reflective for the stop sign that is there as well as the stop bars in the pavement.

Chair Simpson directed staff to refresh the stop bars and reinstall the "stop ahead" sign on west First Street that was previously there before road improvements removed them. He also discussed with staff the possibility of installing a "Hidden Driveway" sign for drivers coming around the corner from 2nd Way, turning onto First Street to prevent collisions with Mr. Clements as he comes out of his driveway. Staff said he would work with Mr. Clements on finding a good location for that and noted painting would not occur until the weather is drier.

Chair Simpson recessed at 8:37 PM and reconvened at 8:50 PM.

NEW BUSINESS

A) TSC-10-003: Stop and No Outlet sign request for Emma at Creekside

TIME – 8:50 PM

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report recommending the stop sign but not the "No Outlet" sign because it is at the end of a public street and there is not a lot of room for a sign there (see official meeting packet for full report).

Discussions followed as to why a sign would not be effective because of the minimal distance and how deceiving the area is at night when it appears that drivers can keep going. It was mentioned that the problems should alleviate when the house is built because drivers will not accelerate when they see a house directly in front of them instead of a driveway that appears to be continued road.

MOTION #3: Brandt/Dawson to approve **TSC-10-003** to install a southbound stop sign on Creekside Lane at Emma Lane and denying the request for a "No Outlet" sign request for Emma at Creekside according to the staff recommendation. (8 Yes/0 No/1 Absent [Sult]) Motion carried.

STAFF REPORTS - GENERAL INFORMATION

A) Police

Sergeant Weaver gave updates on a new officer and services being provided in Dundee. He also discussed the process of warrant retrieval from a judge for DUII stops.

B) Engineering

Mr. Chiu gave updates on final construction drawings and specifics for the Hwy 219 improvements. He said ODOT is reviewing the plans for the right in, right out intersection at 219 and 2nd Street, if it is approved and the developer has the funds for construction it could be put through ahead of 2nd Street project. He gave updates on the Downtown Revitalization demonstration block by College Street and 3rd with proposed improvements for pedestrians and bicycles. He also spoke of the areas to be improved by monies to be received through ODOT for grinding and resurfacing.


C) Items from Commissioners


None.

ADJOURN TO NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 9:29 PM until March 8, 2010.

Approved by the Newberg Traffic Safety Commission this 8th day of March, 2010.


Jennifer L. Nelson
Recording Secretary


Michael R. Simpson ~~Jennifer Dawson~~
Traffic Safety Commission **Chair**
Vice-Chair